Section 14: Overview:

In this section, we are going to be covering what we call topical relevancy. This is such a massive, massive thing when it comes to SEO. So many people don't understand this and it's a massive reason why so many websites fail to get results from SEO. Understand topical relevancy and you're not going to run into any problems.

We're also going to be taking a look at what we call tiered link building. This is kind of an advanced link building strategy. It works super, super well. I use it all the time when building links to ClickSlice and I'll be showing you exactly what it is, how it works and the benefits of tiered link building.

I'm also going to be going over Google's artificial intelligence and machine learning. For those who don't know, these are two really important things in the world of SEO. Google is constantly updating algorithms to include AI, artificial intelligence, and machine learning. So I'll be covering everything you need to know about that to help you take your SEO knowledge to the next level. So without further ado, let's dive into the first video.

Section 14: Topical Relevancy:

In the keyword research section of the course. I ran through how you can find keywords to target, which range from carrying out standard keyword research, or by reviewing your competition. Now a lot of people would have carried out these keyword research processes and picked a keyword to target. They would have written some content targeting that specific keyword and then try to rank for it. For example, if you were a plumber in London, then you would most likely be targeting the keyword plumber London. And as a result, you would write some content on your website targeting the keyword, plumber London. If you are operating in a niche that isn't that competitive, then nine times out of 10, that is going to be absolutely fine. However, if you are operating in a more competitive niche, then you're going to want to do a little bit more than just chucking up a single page on your website going after that keyword.

You see, to rank for competitive terms, you need to prove to Google that your site is related to that topic and not just that specific keyword. This is what we call it Topical Relevancy. Just because you have one page on your website about that keyword, it does not mean that your site is related to that wider topic. When it comes to SEO, Google wants to return the best-matched site to the users to result in the best user experience. As of course, if people have a good time using Google, then they're going to come back and use it again in the future. So if you have been struggling to rank your article on Google, one of your service pages, wherever it may be, it can be due to a lack of low topical relevancy. So let me give an example of just how powerful topical relevancy can be by using a client we used to work with.

We used the work with a boxing authority site. Authority meaning the site was very well established. It had tons and tons of pages on the site, all to do with boxing tips and training. Some examples would be best boxing defence strategies, boxing drills to help improve stamina.

We had how to shadow box in five simple steps, how to generate more power in your punches. Literally the whole site was to do with boxing-related topics. In addition to this, the site also had hundreds and hundreds of high quality referring domains, all linking to the website. This site was primarily monetized by the client selling his own products, which were boxing gloves and boxing bags. Anytime this client put out a boxing related piece of content, which was actually three times a week, we would optimize that piece of content and build a few back links to the article. And it would rank super, super easy. Literally, within a couple of weeks of publishing whatever article it is we would put out that week, we was on the first page of Google.

It was a dream come true every time he wanted to rank anything that had to do with boxing. But after time we were starting to max out the boxing niche. We literally covered every single topic you can imagine to do with boxing. So the client wanted to expand and branch out and start selling protein supplements, which he thought would be a really good idea as protein is needed to repair muscles, which of course is beneficial to boxes who are training for long hours every single day. So our team wrote an article on the five best protein supplements. We optimize that article incredibly well. We built about 15 backlinks in total to that page. But this new page, it didn't even break into the first five pages of Google for any protein supplement related keywords.

The issue was the client was definitely an authority on boxing and training, but because he writes a single page about protein, it doesn't mean he can rank for that page. It would kind of be like a scuba-diving school writing a single article about wakeboarding. There's no reason this school about scuba-diving should have any reason to rank for wakeboarding. So how did we get over this? Well, what we'd done is we created four additional supporting articles all related to protein. We added these four pages to the website to help establish more topical relevancy for the protein supplements landing page. And then we internal linked all of these supporting articles back to the main protein supplements page. So what result did this have to the client's site? Well, let me go over to the client keyword tracker and I'll show you exactly how big of an impact this made.

So as you can see on April 2019, the client's site was not found for this keyword whatsoever. That is because of course, we didn't have any content on the site for this keyword. We then went ahead and published our piece of content and it came in at position 65. And of course there are 10 results per page on Google. So this is roughly page seven for this keyword. As soon as we went ahead and added our four pieces of supporting content, this client's site jumped up from position 65 all the way up to position two in Google. And of course this is in June, 2019. Fast forward to 2021, which is the time I'm recording this video right now, you can see their currently in position one. The site has not dropped whatsoever since we added the supportive content.

So hopefully this just shows you just how impactful adding topically related supporting content can actually be when it comes to SEO. Just by creating additional content and adding it to the site whilst referencing the main piece of content as superior content, that was enough with Google to view the site as being topically related to both boxing and protein as well.

There are two concepts that you need to follow to make sure you get this right. The first is you need to pick the right supporting article topics. As of course, if you pick the wrong supporting article topic, all you're going to do is confuse Google what your page is actually related to, in terms of the broader topic. So how do you determine which is the correct supporting article topic? Well there are two simple ways you can use. If you go over to Google and just search for one of your keywords. So let's imagine you are targeting the keyword protein supplements. What you can do is carry out a search for that in Google, scroll to the bottom of the page. Then as you can see, you got this little option right here, related searches. And these are all different keywords that Google deem to be related to what you just searched for. Which in my instance is protein supplements.

So protein supplement pills, whey protein, best protein powder, vegan protein powder. These are all sub topics that are related to protein supplements. If you have access to Semrush, then what you can also do is carry out a search for your main keyword. So once again, protein supplements, and then as you can see, we've got this big box right here. It has three different headings. We've got keyword variations, questions, and related keywords. So when it comes to using topics that are related, you can use any of the keywords you see under questions or related keywords. For example, what is protein powder? That is absolutely related to protein supplements. And of course you can expand all of these options right here and see more and more keywords.

But essentially you can get tons and tons of ideas by using these SEO tools. You don't just have to use Semrush. You can use another tool called Ahrefs, which is a really good option as well. So that's Ahrefs, like so. If you just carry out a search for Ahrefs, you'll see it number one in Google. It's very similar to Semrush in terms that it gives you lots of keyword ideas.

The second concept which you need to follow is you need to be careful what pages you link to. So let's imagine we have the same example of our boxing site. We have all our supporting pieces of content talking about boxing-related topics, best boxing defences, how to shadow box, and so on. If you then go ahead and go into one of your supporting pieces of content, such as this one, right here, Best Boxing Defense Strategies. Then you go in and add an internal link to the Best Tasting Protein Powder, then all that's going to do is confuse Google to what this page is actually about. As of course, protein powder has no relation to best boxing defense strategies whatsoever. So you want to be super, super careful when it comes to internal links. Essentially, when you add an internal link on your website, what you are doing is telling Google that this page is similar to the page you are linking to. So definitely be careful to keep an eye on your internal links.

A question I get asked all the time is how many supporting pieces of content should I create for my website? Well, unfortunately when it comes to SEO, there isn't really any standard answer which applies to every single website out there, as of course, it's going to be niche specific. So what you ideally want to do is review your competitors. So in our client's example, what we did was review the competition, see how many supporting pieces of content they had linking back to

the main page. And then what we did was simply go out and replicate that across to our client's site too.

However, to give you an answer which has a bit more context and substance, then what I would say you should do is you want to write enough to pool 10 pieces of content until you cover the whole topic you are targeting. That is the best bit of advice I can give you when it comes to creating topically relevant supporting articles. If you cover the whole topic, then there's going to be no doubt whatsoever in the mind of Google that your site is relevant to the main topic. And thus, Google is going to return your website to the users when they carry out a search for a keyword you are targeting. So that brings us to the end of this video. I hope you enjoyed it. And I hope you got a lot of value from it. And if you are struggling to rank on Google, then this could be the exact reason why. I'll see you in the next one.

Section 14: Tiered Link Building:

Tier 2 link building is one of the most commonly debated practices when it comes to SEO. There is no doubt that building teared links can add value to your website if you do it correctly. For those who don't know exactly what tiered link building is, well, let's look at a typical link building process first.

So when you go out and build backlinks to your website, what you'd have is your website at the top, and then below your website, you'd have all these different websites linking back to your site. It tiers 2 to backlink would be a backlink which links to your backlinks. That might be a little bit hard to comprehend at first, but essentially, it is a backlink to your backlinks which links back to your website. Hopefully, that made sense. If it didn't make sense, and of course, I hope this image makes it a little bit more clearer.

But essentially in 2016, with the launch of Google Penguin, the Penguin algorithm, Google made some drastic changes as to how they calculated their link algorithm. Instead of links being calculated on a domain level basis, Penguin now meant that links were calculated on the power of individual pages that were linking to your website. This sparked up an argument for tiered link building as you could essentially have links of lower authority sites and still make them very valuable by building links to the links pointing to your website.

Tiered link building is something that I've been doing personally for the last few years, and it works really, really well if you know what you are doing. So let's start off with the main basics. What links do you build tier 2 links to? As that is a question that a lot of people have, okay, I understand that tiered link building is great, but how do I know what pages I should be building links to? Well, the answer is tier 2 links are best built to pages that have a low page authority but a higher domain authority.

I typically wouldn't build any two-tier links on pages that are lower than a Moz domain authority of 25. The reason being is that you typically get more value from your tier 2 links when they're

linking to pages that already have some decent authority on them. Essentially, the higher the authority your link is, the more value you're going to get out of your tier 2 links.

Another question I get asked quite often when it comes to tier 2 link building, is what type of link should you use for your tier 2's? Well, the answer is pretty straightforward. You basically want to use the same link types that you would use at your tier 1 level. So that would be your guest posts and it'd be your niche edits. However, as these are links at your tier 2 level, you can be a little bit more relaxed in terms of the quality of both of these types of links. However, I don't mean go out there and get any random link from any non-relevant unrelated website, and then build that to your tier 1.

What you want to do is make sure that there's at least some level of quality in these links. Essentially, the way to test that is ask yourself, would you be proud enough to show this back link to one of your clients? If the answer is no, then probably you shouldn't be building them as a tier 2 link. What I mean by that is not the quality and the authority or the actual website you are getting a link from, but more of the content quality you actually have on your tier 2 link. For example, if you are using maybe the main authority 35 and above for your tier 1's, then on your tier 2's, you could use the main authority 25 or 26. So something that's a little less authoritative, but still has some decent quality behind it.

Now, another question I get asked quite a lot as well is how many tier 2 links should I build? The simple answer is one to free per page. If you remember the screenshot I just showed you, I actually used two-tier 2 backlinks per backlink, ignore the fact that is says low-quality backlink right here. The main essence I'm trying to get across is that you should use one to three-tier 2 backlinks to the backlinks you want to power up. Now, of course, this is a rule of thumb. You can go out there and build a little bit less and build a little bit more if you wish.

However, I wouldn't get too carried away with it, as what you have to remember is that over time, your backlinks are going to acquire backlinks anyway. So if you go out there and build 100 tier 2 backlinks, then that's going to be extremely unnatural, and when it comes to doing anything with SEO, what we want to do is look as natural as possible and fitting with the crowd, as of course, as soon as we start to look like we are doing SEO, then guess what, Google is going to be aware of that and they're going to make it harder for us to rank in Google, which has the whole reason why Google doesn't really like SEOs. As of course, people who know and understand SEO, they can get their website on to the first page of Google organically, meaning they don't have to give Google any money paying for Google ads.

The final question which I get asked quite often as well is, does your tier 2 anchor techs matter? Well, the answer is no. Google does not currently track relevance further than what is linking directly to your website, AKA, your tier 1. So if you go out there and build all your tier 1 backlinks, which of course would have relevant anchor text to your website, you don't have to follow that through at your tier 2 level. The reason being is because relevancy doesn't actually matter when you go past the first level.

However, I'm not saying you should go out there and have any random really anchor texts. For example, let's imagine your website is about health and fitness. You would, of course, have all of your tier 1 backlinks linking to your website, referencing what your site is about, which is health and fitness. So that would most likely be some of the anchor texts you are using on your tier 1 backlinks. Now, at your tier 2 level, you don't want to go and say something completely irrelevant, such as maybe dogs or horses that has no relation to what your website is about. However, it's not going to have that much of an impact if you did go ahead and do that.

However, my bit of advice is what I recommend is you go ahead and make them as relevant as possible as long as your tier 2 anchor is somewhat at least related to your main site, then that's going to have a little bit of benefit for you in the long-term if Google updates the algorithm further to make sure that tier 2 backlinks actually matter on anchor text relevancy level.

So that is essentially how the strategy works. It works really, really well to give those stubborn pages a boost up in Google. I really recommend you review your backlink profile by using any SEO tool, find out what backlinks you have that have a low page authority and a high domain authority. Of course, you can use it Moz DA Chrome extension checker for that as showcased earlier on in the course. Then all you want to do is go out there and build one to three-tier 2 backlinks to those backlinks to power them up and then get that link juice powered through to your actual website. I'll see you in the next one.

Section 14: Googles Artificial Intelligence & Machine Learning:

Google's artificial intelligence and machine learning. Artificial intelligence, or AI for short, and its impact on different industries have been a really hot topic of discussion for the past few years and to be fair, all with good reason. The digital marketing industry, in particular, is facing fundamental changes due to revolutionary new intelligent technologies coming out every year. SEO has gone through many transformations over the year from updating hours, from targeting spammy links, VIN content, and so on. In fact, there are roughly 500 to 600 Google updates every single year.

Safe to say that this industry isn't really new to change whatsoever. And while the core SEO principles remain the same, which of course is going to be keyword research, having high-quality content on your website, on-page SEO, link-building, etc., etc., a lot of theories have emerged about forthcoming shifts in SEO strategy, particularly based on AI and machine learning. This video is aimed at shedding some light on exactly what all of this AI, machine learning and jargon actually means in layman's terms that all of us can actually understand exactly what is going on out here.

Because I do see a lot of people worrying about this and saying things online, such as oh no, AI and machine learning is coming. SEO is dead or even things such as we don't stand a chance against the machines. I even saw one last week actually, which said Google's artificial intelligence is going to finish SEO and everyone will have to pay for Google ads. I mean, which is quite funny from my perspective because of course, I understand what it means. And by the

end of this video, you will also understand exactly what this all means, and you'll probably laugh at these statements as well.

But before we dive into all of the details, let's start off with the basics, which is what is AI and machine learning. Well, AI, or artificial intelligence, is a branch of computer science that deals with building intelligent machines that can think and respond like humans. Machine learning on the other hand is actually a subset of AI. So it comes under artificial intelligence and it enables machines to automatically learn and improve it from experience. So basically you have AI at the top, which is this amazing thing that allows machines to think and respond like humans.

Then you have machine learning, which is basically the brain of AI and allows that machine to always improve its systems and processes going forward. So now we cover the basics of AI and machine learning. It's safe to say that you can completely ignore that person on Twitter who is sitting there eight hours a day tweeting that machine learning, AI, they have no relation whatsoever. Now you're probably wondering, well, how does AI and machine learning actually relate to SEO? But one thing I want to highlight before we dive into that is that I want you to remember this one really, really important thing, which is Google's main focus is the user.

So whenever you see anything to do with AI or machine learning in relation to SEO, the main aim is to always make things better for the user. If you can remember that and get a grasp of that content, it's going to make everything make a lot more sense from penalty systems to topical relevancy to semantic savvy AI, all of these efforts are focused on the pure goal of making sure the user has the best experience, as of course, Google's main focus is the user. A lot of SEO experts would have freaked out in 2015 when Google introduced a new addition to the algorithm called Rank Brain, which, if you didn't know, is a machine learning algorithm that helps Google process search results.

What Rank Brain does is utilize the power of artificial intelligence to understand and respond to user queries in the same manner as a human would. For those who don't know, before Rank Brain, so before 2015, 100% of Google's algorithm was actually hand-coded. So what would happen is that Google engineers would implement a change to the algorithm that they think would improve results. They will then leave that for maybe a week, two weeks or whatever the duration is. They would then review the data and decide whether they would leave that change or revert back to the original algorithm. Now with Rank Brain, this is all done automatically.

So all the hype you see online about machine learning is coming to Google, SEO is going to be impossible, it's all absolute rubbish. It's already been here since 2015. Another example of machine learning being used in Google, which is actually another one or the algorithms labeled Google Bert, well, Bert was released in 2019. So it's been around for a decent chunk of time too. And what Bert does is try to understand the intent of the searcher by focusing on concepts and topics rather than individual keywords. It does this by itself with no human input. So once again, it's a machine learning algorithm and it's been with us since 2019.

To give you an idea of how Bert works, well before the Bert update, if you carried out a search for, can you get medicine for someone pharmacy, Google would have returned to site which talks about prescriptions. As you can see from the image on the left-right here, getting a prescription filled, medicine plus medical encyclopedia. However, after the Bert update, Google now returns a website, which is actually answering what you searched for. So we searched for, can you get medicine for someone pharmacy, which of course Google understands this search to actually be related to, can you get medicine for someone at a pharmacy, AKA can you get medicine for someone that isn't actually you.

And what does Google do now after the Bert update, well it returns an article, which is all about can a patient have a friend or family member pick up a prescription, which is a perfect match based on the search intent. And the way that Bert does this is by understanding the deeper meaning behind keywords, AKA the topics and the concepts behind them, and then matching them up with the best results. Now don't panic. I'm not saying keywords are useless because trust me, they certainly are not. But what I am saying is that how these expanding AI technologies will impact SEO is basically a continuation.

That's the keyword here, a continuation of a trend that's been happening in search rankings for years already, which is a focus on relevance, quality and the value of your content. And there are ways we can convey relevancy by utilizing advanced SEO strategies like increasing your site's topical relevancy, using LSI keywords as showcased in the course, quality content and the value of your content. Well, this can be replicated by reviewing the top ranking websites in Google, taking a look at their content may be using a tool such as surfer SEO once again, as a showcase in the course, then you get an idea of exactly what type of content you should be putting out there in relation to your headings, keyword density and so on.

Not so long ago, artificial intelligence was a mere sci-fi concept that if you mentioned it in the meeting, you would literally get laughed out of that meeting. But today in Google, AI and machine learning are already in full effect. People simply just don't realize it. Yes, machine learning and AI technology are transforming ranking factors, but only to better reflect the needs and expectations of human searches. The goal is still and will always be the same, which is optimized for the best user experience. And as long as you do that, you literally have nothing to worry about.

I hope this video helped demystify the whole topic for you as no doubt you're going to be hearing these two terms more and more as you continue into your SEO career. Most likely, you're going to be hearing these terms from people who actually don't really know what they're talking about. But hey, that's their problem and not yours because you now know exactly what is happening and you know what trend Google is taking as they further invest into the artificial intelligence field. I hope you really enjoyed this one and I'll see you in the next one.